

While the U.S. discharge rates are derived from a representative sample of hospitals, the N.C. rates are based on a census of hospitals, with adjustments for nonreporting. Since such adjustments to produce county-of-residence rates do not appear feasible, counties must rely on Medicaid and Medicare discharge rates which do represent 100-percent reporting for those patients. These 1980 county rates are in the Health Data Book (38) and an earlier report in the SCHS Studies series (47).

The N.C. resident hospital discharge rates given below represent 1980 discharges (except normal newborns) per 1,000 Medicaid eligibles or Medicare enrollees. The rates for these two subpopulations may be compared to some in the preceding table for all N.C. residents; they are also a point of comparison for county rates. Altogether, about 56,000 Medicaid discharges among 457,246 Medicaid eligibles and 245,300 Medicare discharges among 667,843 Medicare enrollees are represented. (47)

Medicaid Discharges per 1,000 Eligibles: All conditions (123.6), cardiovascular disease (4.0), cancer (5.0), chronic lung disease, (4.0), diabetes (2.6), accidents/poisoning/violence (8.2), obstetric/perinatal complications (11.0).

Medicare Discharges per 1,000 Enrollees: All conditions (367.3), acute myocardial infarction (10.4), other ischemic heart disease (17.9), stroke (20.3), cancer (30.6), lung cancer (4.3), colon cancer (3.4), prostate cancer (3.9), chronic lung disease (13.4), diabetes (7.6), arthritis (6.7), accidents/poisoning/violence (24.8), kidney disease (7.8).

Unfortunately, trend data for the Medicaid/Medicare discharge rates are not available. The preceding rates do, however, provide baseline data for future studies as well as a comparison for the 1980 county rates (38,47).

The North Carolina Citizen Survey (NCCS), conducted at least annually since 1976 by the Office of State Budget and Management, collects information on chronic health problems in the adult household population. To date, the State Center has produced four reports (45,49-51) detailing those results for the state and its six health service areas.

Due to a change in weighting procedures in 1980, estimates from prior NCCSs are not strictly comparable to 1980-82 estimates. Nevertheless, the following indicators of chronic health problems in the adult household population appear relatively stable (45,46,49-51):

- Excluding arthritis, about one-third of adults have been told by a doctor that they had one or more of the leading chronic diseases - women and nonwhites more often than men and whites. Including arthritis, about four out of ten adults reported diagnosed chronic disease in 1982. (See chart of diseases on next page.)